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Gospel Centered
CHRIST EXALTING

The Lord's Day
December 13, 2020

Covenant's Mission Statement
Covenant seeks to glorify God by
Establishing Disciples biblically,
Engaging Culture redemptively,
Expanding Christ's Church faithfully.

Covenant's Values
Covenant is *biblical* by affirming the Bible as the
authoritative Word of God,
connectional by affiliating with the Presbyterian Church
in America (PCA),
confessional by adhering to the Westminster Standards,
missional by seeking to spread the Gospel worldwide, and
relational by encouraging families to build community.

The Third Sunday in Advent

Joy

“And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10

Prelude

During the prelude, prepare for worship by reflecting on Isaiah 35:10 printed above.

Life of the Church

Opening Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before Thee, opening to the sun above.
melt the cloud of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
stars and angels sing around Thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
singing bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in Thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed,
Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are Thine;
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus, which the morning stars began;
Father love is reigning o’er us, Brother love binds man to man.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife,
joyful music leads us Sunward in the triumph song of life.

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Today’s Advent Readers are Tom and Kim Fox
with Paige and Kerry

Responsive Reading

Reader: Let all who take refuge in God be glad;
Congregation: let them ever sing for joy.
Reader: O God, spread Your protection over them,
Congregation: that those who love Your name may rejoice in You.

Advent Scripture Reading

Philippians 4:4-9

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me - practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Lighting of the Candle

Prayer

Hymn

“Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

refrain: *Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."*

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.

refrain

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

refrain

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Congregational Prayer

Jerry Potts, Ruling Elder

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 35

Jerry Potts, Ruling Elder

¹ *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;*

² *it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.*

³ *Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.*

⁴ *Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.”*

⁵ *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;*

6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.

9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Bob Davis, Deacon

Hymn

*“As with Gladness Men of Old”
(stanzas 1 and 2)*

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious God, may we evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly cradle bed,
there to bend the knee before Him whom heav’n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet ever seek Thy mercy-seat.

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Corporate Confession of Sin

God of salvation, in Christ You have done great things. By Your power You lifted us out of the wasteland of sin and brought us with joy and laughter into Your kingdom. Salvation is Your gift to us.

But we confess that often we try to replace Your gift with our own efforts. We try to complete what is already perfect; we try to add to what is already full. We try to earn what we already have.

Forgive us for our foolishness. Forgive us for not overflowing with joy over Your gift of salvation through Jesus. Enable us to focus on Your grace. Enable us to live grateful and joyful lives in return. For Jesus’ sake alone. Amen.

Individual Prayer and Meditation (Silent Prayer)

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Hymn

*“As with Gladness Men of Old”
(stanzas 3-5)*

As they offered gifts most rare at that cradle rude and bare;
so may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'nly King.

Holy Jesus, ev'ry day keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds Thy glory hide.

In the heav'nly country bright need they no created light;
Thou its Light, its Joy, its Crown, Thou its Sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing alleluias to our King.

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Scripture Reading

Luke 2:22-38

²² And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord

²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”)

²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,

²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed

35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,

37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.

38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Sermon

“A Perspective on Joy”

Pastor Reed

Installation of new Officers (page 8)

Hymn

“Joy to the World”

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns: let men their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

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Scriptural Benediction

Postlude

Sermon Outline
“A Perspective on Joy”
Luke 2:22-38

I. Longing for Joy.

II. Reason for Joy.

III. Response of Joy.

Service of Ordination and Installation

Installation

Session

Mr. Carl Monroe (class of 2023)
Mr. Bruce Hurlbut (class of 2023)
Mr. Jason VanGoor (class of 2023)

Installation & Ordination Deacon

Mr. Scott Freydl (class of 2023)

The warrant and nature of the Office of Deacon

Ruling Elder J. C. Baker

Constitutional Questions to the Candidates

Rev. Tim Reed

- (1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- (2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* and the *Catechisms* of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
- (3) Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
- (4) Do you accept the office of elder or deacon in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?
- (5) Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
- (6) Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity, and edification of the Church?
(Book of Church Order, 24-5)

Constitutional Question to the Congregation

Rev. Tim Reed

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as elders and deacons, and do you promise to yield them all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this Church, entitles him?
(Book of Church Order, 24-5)

The Right Hand of Fellowship by the Session

Declaration

Charge to the Officers

Ruling Elder Jeff Nissen

Charge to the Congregation

Ruling Elder Jerry Potts

MEMBERS OF SESSION
(PT - Partial Term)

Class of 2020
Dan Butkowski

Class of 2021
J. C. Baker (PT)
Kevin Breniman
Jerry Potts

Class of 2022
Jeff Nissen
Tom Paulus
Bill Scholl

TEACHING ELDER
Tim J. Reed, Senior Pastor

BOARD OF DEACONS
(PT - Partial Term)

Class of 2020
John Dambaugh
Ben Russ (PT)
Jason Van Goor (PT), Chairman

Class of 2021
William Fennell
David Matlock
Jeff Rooker

Class of 2022
Bob Davis
Tom Fox

STAFF

Tim J. Reed, Senior Pastor
Derek Coyle, Assistant Pastor
Liz Baker, Choir Director

Mike Walsh, Pianist
Ben Russ, Bookkeeper
Peggy Washburn, Administrative Assistant

COVENANT'S MISSIONARY FAMILIES

Paul & Connie Backstrom, Little Rock
Peter & Jenny Boling, Mexico
Dan & Nancy Butkowski, Little Rock
Scott & Kathy Craig, Mexico
Roger & Laura Dye, South Carolina
Del & Hazel Farris, Ministry to State
Jamie & Jacki Gildard, France
Rob & Jenny Ilderton, England

Darlene Johnson, Japan
Tom & Karen Mirabella, Japan
Pete & Ruth Mitchell, France
Jim & Karan Romaine, New York City
Jim Wroughton, Peru (retired)
Will & Martha, International
Wes & Kim, Undisclosed

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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